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Report of the Secretary-General

Part I: Current situation and activities

(c) Implementation of the general programme of work for the period 2012-2013

I. Introduction

1. This document contemplates the work undertaken by the UNWTO Secretariat since the last report of this kind presented during the 93rd session of the Executive Council (Madrid, Spain, June 2012). It covers the period from May to August 2012, both included. It is presented along the Organization's two strategic objectives: competitiveness and sustainability while also giving specific information on technical assistance to Members.

II. Competitiveness

A. Publications

2. The *Compendium of Tourism Statistics* and the *Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, 2012 edition*, are now available in printed versions. The electronic version of the data pertaining to both is available, and updated regularly, in the UNWTO e-library (Factbook).

3. The *UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2012 Edition*¹, has been released in English, French and Spanish. It presents a concise overview of international tourism in the world based on the results for the year 2011. It includes key trends in international tourism in 2011, results by (sub)region and country of destination, the world's top tourism destinations, outbound tourism by region and top spenders and long-term forecast.

4. The Secretariat also published two issues of the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer* (May and July, Volume 10). The May issue presents a comprehensive analysis of 2011 international tourism receipts, and the July issue includes preliminary results of international tourism for the period January-April and an outlook for the period May-August 2012.

¹ Document available online at: <http://mkt.unwto.org/en/publication/unwto-tourism-highlights-2012-edition>



B. Events

5. **The UNWTO-Themis Regional capacity-building workshop on Adventure Tourism**, Abha, Saudi Arabia (5-9 May): This workshop focused on the development of adventure tourism management strategies at destination level.
6. **Seminar on Destination Branding: Building New Opportunities in a Connected World**, Batumi, Georgia (10 May), in the framework of the 54th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Europe. This seminar helped to achieve greater awareness about the added value of effective brand design, development and management.
7. **Silk Road Think Tank** (Lausanne, Switzerland, 4 June 2012): 170 future hospitality leaders presented innovative strategies for how ten UNWTO Member States can maximize their positioning as Silk Road destinations.
8. **UNWTO International Conference on Seizing Tourism Market Opportunities in Times of Rapid Change**, Dead Sea, Jordan (5-6 June): jointly organized with the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan, the conference focused on the following issues: global changes and future scenarios, new consumers, growing aviation, fostering foreign direct investment and competitive destinations.
9. UNWTO organized the **Caribbean Tourism Summit & Outlook Seminar 2012**, jointly with the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and the Ministry of Tourism of Jamaica, in Montego Bay, Jamaica (15-16 June). The summit covered, among other topics, aviation and facilitation policies, the revision of air interconnection policies and the short-term outlook in the Caribbean.
10. UNWTO held a **Special Training Session** for media professionals during the Global Media Forum of Deutsche Welle, Bonn, Germany (25-27 June).
11. **6th UNWTO Asia/Pacific Executive Training Programme on Tourism Policy and Strategy**, Paro, Bhutan (25-28 June). This programme is specifically designed to support tourism policy makers and managers. It aims to strengthen effective and responsive policies and strategies that in turn must adapt to changing priorities and concerns at the national and destination levels.
12. The **First INRoUe Seminar on Regional Tourism** took place in Venice (5-6 July) with the support of UNWTO and in cooperation with Ciset / Università Ca' Foscari, CICTourGUNE (Cooperative Research Centre in Tourism) and the Veneto Region Government. The seminar has been conceptualized around a key document² on **Measuring and Analyzing Regional Tourism: Towards a set of general guidelines**. This document and the other contributed papers are expected to form a significant step towards the design and development of Regional Tourism Information Systems.
13. **4th T20 Ministers' Meeting**³ in Merida, Mexico (15-16 May): please refer to document CE/94/3(l)(b): Mainstreaming tourism in the global agenda.
14. **Protection of Tourists/Consumers and Travel Organizers**: please refer to document CE/94/3(l)(e).

² Document available online at: http://dtxtg4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/venice_abstract.pdf

³ More information on the 4th T20 meeting: <http://t20.unwto.org/en/content/4th-t20-ministers-meeting-mexico-2012>

15. **University Course Tourism and International Cooperation for Development**, Washington, USA (20 August-18 October). This intensive course, offered by the UNWTO.Themis Foundation in collaboration with The George Washington University, trains university graduates and professionals in subject areas related to development and international cooperation through tourism and gives them the opportunity to become part of the UNWTO.Volunteer Corps that support international UNWTO cooperation projects.

III. Sustainability

A. Publications

16. **Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**: This publication presents an overview of the status of tourism in SIDS, while providing evidence of the importance the sector has for the sustainable development of many islands and for the achievement of the MDGs.

17. **Destination Wetlands: Supporting Sustainable Tourism**: This UNWTO/Ramsar publication was launched (English, French and Spanish) at the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP11) in Bucharest, Romania (6-13 July). Through 14 case studies, it demonstrates how sustainable tourism practices in and around wetlands can contribute to conservation, economic growth, poverty reduction and support to local cultures. The launch of the publication this year coincided with the celebration of the World Wetlands Day 2012 on the theme of Wetlands and Tourism.

18. **Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations – A Guidebook**: the Chinese version of this key UNWTO publication is now available.

19. Translation into Serbian of the publication **Toolbox for Crisis Communications in Tourism** as part of a further customization of this important tool to the specific needs and conditions of each country. UNWTO Member States are invited to follow this example.

B. Events

20. **High-level UNWTO Regional Conference on Green Tourism** in the framework of the joint Commission meeting for Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, Chiang Mai, Thailand (3-5 May): During this event, several countries presented national experiences on how, if properly planned and managed, tourism can be one of the most promising drivers of sustainable socio-economic development in Asia.

21. **UNWTO-Themis Course on Excellence in Tourism Management: Public Use Management in Protected Areas**, Puerto Madryn, Argentina. The course aimed at familiarizing with technical criteria for planning, design and implementation of tourism activities in protected areas.

22. **International Conference on the role of Municipalities in Tourism Development and Security in the Americas**, Lima, Peru (18-20 June). The event was aimed to include tourism in the different planning processes and in the development of local policies regarding both sustainability and security issues.

23. **Active participation in Rio+20⁴ (June):**

- (a) **Green Innovation in Tourism Side Event**, co-hosted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) with the support of the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism and the UNWTO Affiliate Member CNC-SESC-SENAC. The event highlighted the intrinsic value of green innovation in tourism for companies, governments, destinations and their communities.
- (b) The **Official Side Event on Tourism for a Sustainable Future** was organized by UNWTO and the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism discussed the role of tourism in the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.

24. **Regional Seminar on Responsible Tourism: Opportunities for Women and Youth** in the framework of the 53rd meeting of the Regional Commission for Africa, Calabar, Nigeria (26-27 June). This seminar aimed at determining ways of overcoming obstacles to the empowerment and equality of women and youth in the tourism sector and called for enhanced cooperation and coordination between governments, regional and international organizations, the private sector, and civil society actors.

25. The **Eleventh Meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics** has closed with calls to make “Safe Coastal Tourism” a priority in coastal destinations worldwide (Rome, Italy, 12-13 July). Committee members further backed UNWTO’s firm stand against human trafficking, especially child trafficking, in the tourism sector, applauding the Organization’s signature of a cooperation agreement with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in April 2012.

IV. Technical cooperation and relation with Members

A. New developments in technical cooperation⁵

26. During the period of May to August 2012, the following technical cooperation projects and MDG-F projects were completed:

- (a) **Nicaragua** (MDG-F): Cultural Recovery and Creative Productive Development on the Caribbean Coast
- (b) **Oman**: Tourism Manpower Needs Analysis and Medium-term Human Resources Development Action Plan
- (c) **Turkey** (MDG-F): Alliances for Cultural Tourism (ACT) in Eastern Anatolia

27. During the same period, the conceptualization of the following two projects was finalized and the corresponding agreements signed. Both projects are expected to be launched in September 2012:

- (a) **Ghana**: National Tourism Development Planning
- (b) **Uganda**: Improving Policies and Regulations to Support Development of Markets in Tourism

⁴ Please also refer to document CE/94/3(l)(b): Mainstreaming tourism in the global agenda

⁵ Please also see the document on ongoing technical projects: CE/93/4(a) Annex

28. In addition, preparations were made for the following ST-EP projects, which are expected to be launched in the fourth quarter of 2012:

- (a) **Jordan**: Youth Career Initiative (funded by the UNWTO ST-EP Foundation)
- (b) **Lesotho**: Kome Rural Homestay Project (funded by the UNWTO ST-EP Foundation)
- (c) **Mozambique**: Vocational Training and SME Development for the Tourism Sector in Maputo (funded by the Flemish Government)
- (d) **Namibia**: Initiatives Fund for Rural Women Employees (funded by the Banesto Foundation)
- (e) **Timor Leste**: Capacity Building for Tourism Employees (funded by the UNWTO ST-EP Foundation and the Government of Macau S.A.R.)

V. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council

29. The Executive Council is requested:

- (a) To take note of all the activities undertaken by the Secretariat in the framework of its programme of work.